2011-03-18 BVPS BG 18.58-61 ND Questions - free will, independence, coming back to Gokula

BVPM: **The next three verses explain what will be the result of following and not following Krishna’s instructions. If Arjuna becomes conscious of Krishna, then he will pass over all obstacles of conditioned life, by Krishna’s grace. If however, he does not work in such consciousness, but acts through false ego, not hearing Krishna, he will be lost. If he did not fight, then he would be falsely directed by his nature, and would have to be engaged in warfare anyway. Under illusion, Arjuna was declining to act according to Krishna’s direction, but compelled by the work of his own nature, he would act all the same.**

Conditioned life means that one’s in illusion of what’s going on. One doesn’t see things as they are. One doesn’t see Krishna, how He has entered everything, how He is part of everything. Not seeing that, that’s conditioned life; you see that, you’re not conditioned. If he sees, he’s not conditioned, so all the problems that come with conditioned life, all the anxieties all the miseries, the happiness and distress, all this is not there, but if he doesn’t see according to this, then it is there, and because then, he’s not acting on his transcendental nature, by engaging his situation in the world, in Krishna’s service, then he will act according to that conditioned nature, exclusively.

People will say “We’re independent. We can do what we like.” But, that’s just another form of illusion. It’s just another aspect of false ego. It’s not reality. Because we think it, it happens. But, that only happens with God. He’s *satya-sankalpa*, what He thinks, that’s what happens. So, trying to be God, we think “Whatever my mind wants, that’s what will happen.”, and unfortunately, because of conditioned nature, it doesn’t necessarily. If you have the *karma*, it might. If you don’t have the *karma*, it won’t. These are the choices.

Prabhupada says the living entity has two choices: Krishna or *maya.* If you choose Krishna, then it’s set what you do. You follow the internal potency, but that’s voluntary. Or, if you choose *maya,* then you’ll be forced to act under the modes of nature. It’s not that there’s another option. When Krishna says it’s this or that, He means it’s this or that. There’s not a third option. He makes the rules; its His game. Its His ball.

So, if one doesn’t act in consciousness of Krishna, it’s acting on the false ego, because there’s a false identity, something to do with the material body, and the extensions of the situation it’s in. They may be very pious, may be very nice, may be very wonderful, but still it’s false. It’s not that it doesn’t exist, but you’re not that. This rock exists, but that doesn’t mean I’m the rock, just because it exists. I exist. The rock exists, so I’m the rock. That’s the logic. It might make a good song, but it’s not going to actually function.

. **Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana comments: Arjuna says, “Even though fighting is my *dharma*, I do not have the inclination, because I fear the sin caused by killing Brahmanas and Gurus.”**

He has what he’s supposed to do. He doesn’t want to do it because he’s afraid of the reactions.

**Krishna says, “If you take shelter of false identity, thinking you know what is right and wrong, and contemplate ‘I will not fight’, such a resolve will definitely not bring results. *“Prakrti*, My *maya*, transformed as passion will engage you, who have ignored My words, will engage you, who have ignored My words in fighting anyway, which will cause killing of *gurus* and *brahmanas.* Being bound by your actions as a *ksatriya,* you will fight anyway, even against your will.”**

He’s saying he wants to avoid. It sounds good. That’s the point of why we’re in the material world, because it sounds good. Why do we do what we do, in the material world, because it sounds good. We think it will work. Its not something else. It sounds like it’s something very nice. You have to be very careful of that, because the modern mentality is if it sounds good and it seems like it’s a good thing, then it’s authorized, but no. It’s a matter of is it your duty or not?

It says false identity. False identity means “I know what is right and wrong.” as opposed to *guru, sadhu* and *sastra* says what is right and wrong, “I follow that. As a servant of authority, I follow that.” But if I think, “No. On my own authority.” that’s false ego. It appears, one could say “Oh, it’s not working on the false ego. I’m a *ksatriya*, therefore I’m working in this mentality, and so I’m giving up that false mentality to save *gurus* and *brahmanas*.”, but it’s false ego that he thinks it’s his choice to make.

Here, now, as we were starting before, it sounds quite philosophical. Now, we’re bringing it closer to what’s my independence, what’s my free will? What’s actually me? What’s actually the soul? What’s something else, that’s not? Here the element is that he thinks, “I will go against my duties.” The point is, you’re supposed to please Krishna, and then, what do you please Krishna with? The performance of your duties. He wants to perform his duties for his own satisfaction. He doesn’t like the outcome, he doesn’t want to do his duties. That’s false ego.

Now, if he wants to do his duties, he likes his duties. He’s attached to them, or identifies with them, but wants the result for Krishna, that’s *karma-yoga*. That’s still bona fide, because it’s connected to Krishna. He’s contemplating Krishna along with his other desires, but what we discussed in this chapter is, having surrendered to Krishna, then you perform your duties, to please Him. That’s the difference between pure devotional service and *karma-yoga*.

You start with, “I do the work, get the result, give it to Krishna, or give the result to Krishna, then do the work.” One will act according to his nature anyway, it doesn’t really matter. People can say whatever they like, people will act they way they’re going to act, anyway.

It’s nice. People feel good about it that “I’ve discussed my independence and my free will and how I’ll do what I want, and all kinds of nice platitudes.” And then they’ll just do what they were going to do anyway, according to the modes of nature, but at least they felt good about it. The guy’s going to die anyway, so he says something is support of the revolution, or in support of his country or something like that, then they shoot him and he feels better. That’s basically what goes on.

It’s just that we’ve said “Yes!” due to our false ego, then we feel a little bit better about being forced to do what we’re going to do.

**Therefore, one should not think that by rejecting the Lord’s order, he becomes independent.** **One will remain contolled, the only difference is one will be under the control of the material energy, that’s all.**

So, since it’s free will, your choice, why not choose the Lord? That’s the point. It’s very obvious, what you get from one, what you get from the other. That’s all. Rejecting that, one is still unable to give up his false concept of being the doer and the knower. But here the knower means not the knower of the soul, here the knower means he is the knower of the field, but as the one attached to controlling and enjoying the field. Here, when we say the field and the knower, that means there’s a difference. If the knower thinks they’re the field, that’s not the knower. That’s just the field.

**In verses 61 to 62, the Lord imparts even more confidential knowledge. The Supreme Lord is in everyone’s heart, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated as on a machine made of material energy. Krishna advises Arjuna to surrender unto Him, because by His grace, one will attain transcendental peace and the supreme eternal abode.**

Krishna mentioned before that how the process works is you make the endeavor, the sincere endeavor and Krishna, being pleased with that sincere endeavor, by His grace, one becomes transcendental.

**Krishna declared this knowledge as most confidential. He told Arjuna to deliberate fully, then do as he wished.**

Why would this be more confidential than what He already said, before? There’s confidential knowledge in the 7th chapter, then it gets more confidential, then most confidential. Then, it keeps getting more confidential. How many more confidentials are there? The point is, here He’s saying surrender unto Him as a person.

He’s saying the *paramatma*, the supersoul is directing the wanderings of all living entities. He’s not saying “I’m directing.” He’s saying supersoul’s directing, who is Him. But there He’s just interacting on a very small scale, with the living entities and their material desires and what needs to be arranged on the material platform to accomplish that. For God, that’s not very impressive. Not very special.

Special is the interaction with the devotees, based on devotion. That’s the most confidential element. You have material energy, then you have how it works on the platform of how it actually works as *brahman.* That’s confidential knowledge. Then, one can see the difference between the soul and the body.

Then, more confidential is to be able to see the difference between the soul and the supersoul. Then, more confidential is act out of devotion for the Lord. Then, there’s more confidential meaning within, how to separate the soul and the body, then you get all the last chapters telling you how to see the material energy, the modes of nature, how they’re functioning. But all this is controlled by the supersoul. But, the most confidential, the final point is that Krishna, as a person, *bhagavan* is interacting with His devotees out of loving devotion.

That platform, being the consideration why you’ll do something or not do something, that’s the most confidential. Not that, “Lord’s in the heart, so He sees.” No. That’s not the point Its not that Krishna sees. “Because He sees, therefore I don’t do it. If I don’t remember, I don’t think He sees, so therefore, I do it.” That’s not actually the point. It’s because of devotion, you consider Krishna’s feelings, Krishna’s opinion, what would make Him happy. That’s the most confidential.

This is what he’s being brought to, but one can do that, that’s the best, but if not, all the technical knowledge has been given in the chapters before. That will help one be more conscious of Krishna through the *brahman* and *paramatma* understandings, and understanding of the material world, then one can come to the point of surrendering to Krishna as a person.

Q: If someone surrenders directly to Krishna as a person, would that surrender be more fragile than if you take the whole process?

BVPM: It depends upon the commitment to that. The *gopis*, they surrendered in that way, so it’s very solid. It’s just a matter of, once the mind accepts something, that’s generally solid. If it’s connected to Krishna, then that’s there.

Intelligence is there by discriminating between the material energy and Krishna. You have so many things, so you discriminate between them, which is the nicest. How much Krishna is nicest, is so much greater than anything else. The difficulty comes when Krishna is an option.

“We could do this, or we could do that. It’s not necessarily that we discriminate.”  
“He was talking *prajalpa*, and all that and I haven’t seen them in a long time and it was really great.”   
“Yesterday there was a really nice *kirtana* in the evening, *Maharaja* was leading it was really great.” “Yesterday at lunch, we had this and that was so far out.”   
“That person did this stupid thing.” It’s just a thing.

At least there’s a connection, so that’s good. Krishna is accepted by the mind as something that being involved with is pleasurable, is nice. So then, one’s not averse, but here, we’re talking about that complete surrender, so the mind has taken that except for Krishna, nothing else is.

The *gopis*, it’s not that there’s another topic to discuss. There’s not another person to be with. In that case, then it’s strong. But if the mind is accepting, it’s not working on the intellectual platform, and it’s just an option, that would be weak, so one cultivates knowledge, so that one starts to see the weakness of the other options, and actually see that what’s giving a taste within the other options is actually Krishna. Then, it starts to gradually bring everything toward Krishna. It’s hard to get away then.

**Krishna declared this knowledge as most confidential. He told Arjuna to deliberate fully, then do as he wished.**

If it’s a relationship, it’s still voluntary. If this element is there, the relationship is there. Someone does something, they may do something you don’t like, but the point is you interact on that platform. If they adjust, then you adjust how you interact. But if you make it now, “No. This is the identity. That’s the field.” Even though they’ve changed, you’re not seeing the field, but the present is, they’re changing, or they’ve understood that there’s a mistake. That’s actually the present. If you’re dealing with, “No. You did this.”, that’s the past. It doesn’t mean it’s not a consideration, but to make that all there is, then things fall apart. If Krishna did that, He wouldn’t have any relationship with any entity in the material world. No. But, how you surrender, that He reciprocates. If you don’t surrender, He doesn’t deal in that way. He reveals according to how you surrender to the material energy. It’s still Him, but you don’t think its Him. You think “It’s my fancy car.” Therefore, He interacts with you on the basis of how you deal, according to your *karma*.

You have *karma* to have good prestige, and the prestige element of your car will interact with you nicely. If you don’t have, even if you want it, it won’t happen.

Q: Does the *karma*, for the devotees, remain the same?

BVPM: Yes, but the point is are you functioning? Is it *karma* first and then results for Krishna, or is results for Krishna, and then you engage the *karma*?

Comment: We cannot freely change the body.

BVPM: What’s the need? Do you need to change your body to do service? Do you need to change your house, or your car, or your shoes?

A: To get a better one?

BVPM: That’s there, but why would you want a better one?

A: It depends.

BVPM: That’s the point. If the better one is for you, but you’ll use it for Krishna, that’s *karma-yoga*. If it’s that it will get a better result for Krishna, then you get the shoes, then its pure devotion. This is the point. It’s really really simple, but the problem is, we’re really attached to “It’s mine, and then I give it to Krishna, because then I get credit for it.”

“If I do something, and get the results, then give it away, that’s very religious, very pious. Everybody should be standing up, and clapping and whistling and Hari Bol, and all this and that.” But the point is, “No. You’re doing it for Krishna, so therefore, if anyone acknowledges it or not, it doesn’t matter. You’ve done it for Krishna.” That’s why the pure devotee doesn’t need to be recognized. That’s how he can be humble.

The other one can’t be humble because he needs to be recognized. It may not be “I’m great, and I’m the doer.”, but it’s “No. I want the emotional support that comes from a religious act.” because someone could say, “No, no. He’s very humble!”, and he may be. He thinks “I’m not really the doer.”, but he wants that recognition. So, then that way, it’s not ultimately free from false ego, because he identifies as the recipient of religious appreciation.

That’s why, when Prabhupada says, unless one’s a devotee, there are no good qualities, it’s meant. If you dig deep enough, there isn’t any. But, for the devotee, you dig deep enough, you find Krishna and if you dig deeper, you find more Krishna. That’s why its said, you don’t have to change the situation. You only need to change the situation if you identify with that situation so much in the way of your position in it, or as the doer, or as the enjoyer of the results, that if you function in that, you can’t connect it to Krishna, therefore by adjusting the situation, one would be more conscious so that one could apply that, then that’s what’s done.

That’s the point that Prabhupada gives about the *brahmacari*. In the beginning, he seperates himself from the social environment because in that social environment, he’ll just act according to habit, so he separates himself and then he becomes conscious. When he’s conscious, he can function and see Krishna. Once he sees Krishna in everything, then he can be back in the social environment, preach and not have a problem. It may be beneficial to do that, but that’s not the point.

Devotees get distracted that that is exclusively the devotional point. No. The point is you’re trying to remember Krishna. Detachment is not actually the point. That it’s offered to Krishna, that’s the point. To offer it to Krishna, then if it doesn’t come naturally, then it has to be because of detachment. “I’m able to do the work without attachment, and therefore, give the result to Krishna.” But what you’re trying to get to is “I want to please Krishna, so I’ll do this work for Him.” It’s the opposite. That’s why it becomes confusing. It looks exactly the same.

The *karma-yogi* and the pure devotee doing the same activity will do it exactly the same if they both have the same ability and the same sophistication. They’ll get the same result. So, it looks exactly the same, but there’s a world of difference, in that the one is pure because Krishna is the initial consideration, and then the work is the secondary, while for the *karma-yogi*, the work is the primary, and Krishna’s the secondary. But, Krishna being connected at any level is still good.

Therefore, the duck taking *prasadam* at Regent Park is still good, because it’s connected to Krishna. It’s not that the duck comes up and goes, “Is this *maha-prasadam*?” and then goes

“What offering?”

“Oh, it was the *vaikalya-bhoga*”

“Oh, okay. That’s cool. *Raja-bhoga’s* too heavy; we’re ducks, you know.”

Q: If you’re doing something to serve Krishna’s devotees directly in relation for them to go closer to Krishna, is that the same as serving Krishna directly?

BVPM: Yeah. The point is the result for the other person in connection to Krishna, that’s where you’re starting from. You don’t have something invested to gain from it. Otherwise, the element of sacrifice means you’re doing it for Krishna; that’s the ultimate sacrifice, but the definition is that you’re voluntarily giving up something for someone else. So, if that’s done before or after, that makes the quality. “I do it, then I give it up.” That’s good. People will say, “He was moral.” or “He was ethical, but he may have to wrestle with it, but it’s cool, the good guys won.” But if it’s being done just to please them first, that’s even better. “He’s so selfless.”

If he does it, then wrestles with it, and gives it up, they’ll say he’s moral, he’s religious or he’s ethical, or he wants to do the right thing, but if he just does it first, they’ll say “He’s selfless.” But, the point is is there a need for him to be recognized for that, or experience that exchange, then there’s something there for themselves.

They’re feeding the poor kids in Africa, so normal ones go there get a picture and tell them how they’re happy, so then they’re happy that they’re happy and stuff like that, but it makes them happy to know that someone else is happy in this way. It’s not a bad thing, but there’s still that mundane emotional thing because the point is that that sense of happiness still comes from Krishna. That’s not been recognized. But you’ll find the really big guys, they actually have the arrangements and the money. They actually fly to Africa, see the kid’s being fed, or even better, feed them themselves, and then they get that direct interaction which inspires them even more. Still, they’re not seeing that happiness is coming from Krishna, so it’s still underlyingly for themselves, although he’s benefitting.

If you’re going to be selfish, share it. That’s better. That’s a higher consciousness. Still, higher than that is that you’re performing the duty because that’s what you should do. You have done it, “You should give it away, and you should give it to someone who’s qualified.” That’s the point of making these fine discriminations here.

Q: Can I ask about the Varnashram College?

BVPM: Not in this environment, because here, it should be on the topic. Varnashram College is it’s own subject. That would be discussing *dharma* and how to apply it properly.

Q: The person who’s acting on the platform of pure devotional service, is on the platform of *akarma,* and is the person who’s acting first considering the work, and offering it to Krishna, on the platform of *karma*?

BVPM: Someone who’s performing *karma-yoga*, is he acting on the platform of *karma*, so in pure devotional service is that *akarma*? No. They’re both acting without *karma*. The difference is, he’s not getting *karma* for the activity, but because of attachment to the result, he will experience the happiness or distress that goes in relationship to that. It looks like *karma*, but it’s not.

Krishna’s reciprocating according to how you surrender. You’re dealing with Krishna Himself, therefore, He’s making that arrangement. The other, its just the three modes of material nature take care; she knows what to do. It’s happening in polluted consciousness.

Comment: Before entering the stage of pure devotional service, one has to make conscious endeavor and utilize one’s consciousness every time and put it in the right way.

BVPM: The analyzation can happen either in pure devotional service, or in *buddhi-*yoga*. Buddhi-yoga* means that definitely has to be there. Pure devotional service may be more spontaneous, or may have this intellectual aspect, depending upon how well we’re situated.

Comment: Depending on the element which one practices.

BVPM: Yes. What one always has to understand is that there’s always gradation. That’s why Krishna goes through, and there’s so many levels of confidential knowledge. The point is, as soon as one is conscious of Krishna, that’s where reality begins. Then there’s deeper and deeper levels of being conscious of Krishna. The greatest is “It pleases Krishna, the person, therefore I do it in this way.” That’s then, what he’s trying to get into.

Otherwise, the elements of *brahman*, *paramatma,* that’s all how all the indirect elements can be connected. But, ultimately what is seen in connection with Krishna as a person, and if that activity will be considered an activity in the mode of goodness, or an activity that would be pious, or its connection is completely for Krishna, then it would remain in that state. If not, one has connected the activity to Krishna, and because of it’s particular situation, one is applying this on a very narrow aspect where one can actually get a completeness in the workings, connecting it to Krishna, but the quality of what one is offering isn’t actually something that Krishna as a person would appreciate, therefore, it will be dropped. It will be replaced with something offerable.

We gave the example. The person is seeing Krishna in connection with alcohol, but Krishan as a person doesn’t like alcohol, so you can’t offer it to Krishna, so on that level it would have to be dropped.

Q: So, it would be *brahman*?

BVPM: On the lower level, the *brahman*, the *paramatma* you can see the workings of it, so on that level, you can connect it to Krishna. It’s not that it’s being offered to Krishna specifically. You can only offer the pure water, and see the taste is connected to Krishna. You’re connecting to the universal form. That’s *paramatma*. On that level, one is purified. After one is purified, we can’t rationalize and say, “That’s enough. It’s Krishna conscious.” No. It’s not enough.

If that were there, Krishna could have stopped after the third chapter or fifth chapter, which would be the conclusion. You have the *karma*, and then you have the knowledge by which you act, and then you combine those two and *hari bol,* that’s it, supersoul has already been involved. He’s bringing out that it has to get to the platform of *bhagavan,* but to do that you have to cut out all aspects of the material.

If I’m talking to you and am always looking at my watch, it’s not very nice because you’re distracted. The point is *bhagavan* means He’s fully committed to interact, that means the reciprocation will be the same level of commitment. That means there can’t be any material distractions. Anything you’re dealing with within the material sphere is connected to Krishna and connected because of its relationship, as the result for Krishna Himself, as that person. It would be given up.

In the beginning, the person may see the alcohol in connection, but as he becomes purified, then it’s, “Well, I’m doing this to please Krishna as a person; does He really like alcohol? No. So therefore, I can’t offer that. So, therefore I’ll go out and buy some grape juice.” That, you can offer. The problem’s not the grapes and the water, the problem’s the alcohol. As a person, He doesn’t like that, but because it’s part of the material manifestation, then as *brahman* and *paramatma*, they’re working with it.

The potency in that, the intoxicating factor, that’s all Krishna, but what He’s pointing out here is you can function on that platform, that Krishna as a person. This makes the distinction between where I take whatever’s in my life as it is, and connect it to Krishna, and then moving forward that there are certain elements of my life that aren’t that nice to connect to Krishna, so I improve the quality. Like the shoes.

If we don’t accept that point there, then we’re rationalizing. Then we’re saying, staying on the level of *karma-yoga, jnana-yoga,* that’s it and it’s fine and equal to pure devotional service, and talking about pure devotional service is fanatic, it means they’re not accepting Krishna as a person, so technically it’s atheism. If you only accept part of Krishna, and not part, it’s atheism because Krishna’s complete. That part that’s connected, that’s good, but that part that’s not connected, that’s not good. That’s why it’s very important not to rationalize and not to create philosophies, because one has some idea of how to connect it.

You want to do the right thing. You want to be Krishna conscious, at the same time, false ego’s very attached to one’s identity as one’s misidentifications, so one rationalizes these things that “They’re okay, because they’re connected to Krishna.” That’s why Krishna says that’s confidential to get to that platform, but there’s more confidential which means you start to go beyond that till He gets to the middle chapters where He introduces pure devotional service which means you reverse the process. You’re dealing with the person. So then He establishes who the person is.

To make that jump between the two, you have to be able to very clearly tell what’s material and what’s not, so that fine knowledge is given in these last chapters. That will show one how to discriminate very clearly. They’ll say “I’m doing it for Krishna.” But if you analyze it, is one doing it for Krishna?

Comment: It has to be according to *guru, sadhu* and *sastra*.

BVPM: To please Krishna according to *sadhu, sastra*. The *guru* knows how to please Krishna, that’s why if you don’t do what the *guru* says, it’s really hard to please Krishna. He knows how to please Krishna, if you have false ego that “I also know.” that’s going to be a problem. That’s the absolute platform, but it doesn’t mean that platforms before that aren’t bona fide. But they’re not the goal. They’re methods to get there. There’s always a goal, but then there’s a goal beyond that. Pure devotional service, that’s the ultimate position one’s trying to get to.

You’re on the bus to Calcutta, and they stop for tea at Ranaghat, so everyone gets off the bus and uses the bathroom, and one likes it there so one stops there and the bus drives off. Then people say, “What are you doing?”

“What do you mean? I got from Mayapura to here. What are you talking about. I’ve been around a long time. This is forty years. I’m a Prabhupada disciple. Who are you to say all this? When you weren’t even a devotee, I was doing all this and that.”

“But you’re in Ranaghat, Calcutta’s another two hours!”

“No! Is the glass half-full or half-empty!?”

“Get on the bus!”

This is the problem, the community develops around rationalizing whatever’s the lowest common denominator of Krishna consciousness. Then you call it a community. Community means there’s a common value. What’s the common value? What’s the way that connects my material desires to Krishna in the simplest way with minimal endeavor that everybody can relate to. Then you’ll say, “Yes. this is a community.” That’s a start. That’s okay, but if you say “That’s done.”, you have problems, because then you have to come back.

If you’re attached to that, it’s not a matter of you’re trying to do it for Krishna, and attachments are there, that’s sincere. But there’s still impurities, but this is you’re actually comfortable with this identity. This Krishnized false identity, you’re comfortable with it.

Comment: Proud.

BVPM: Proud of it, other things. That is where you end up on the heavenly planets because whatever it is that distracts you, that’s what you’ll get. Then you come back in religious or wealthy families. Then you have to become a devotee again. Or, the other, if you’re determined, like that, then if you don’t go back to Godhead, you come back in a family of devotees. There’s a difference.

Q: This explanation given is clear to me, but it brings up some points that were cloudy to me when I asked in class, that is one of the teachings of the *acaryas* I’ve seen indicates to me that one has to be very high, 100% to attain *krsna-loka*, to go back to Godhead.

BVPM: How do you define “Go back to Godhead.”? This is the problem.

Comment: To attain love of Krishna in one of the five *rasas*.

BVPM: But what do you mean by that? Where is that situation?

A: In *goloka-vrndavana*

BVPM: Okay, but then, where is *gokula*?

A: Okay, so is that the manifestation on this planetary system?

BVPM: Yes. The point is, those *gopis* when Krishna blew His flute, on the night of the *rasa* dance, and they didn’t get to go, were they in their spiritual bodies?

A: Well, they were in Krishna’s pastimes.

BVPM: Yes, so they had spiritual forms. The *svarupa-siddhi* means, that’s the platform of *brahma-bhuta*. That’s why we don’t put too much emphasis on it. The *sahajiyas* and others put a lot of emphasis on it, because there’s not a lot of difference between a *sahajiya* and a *mayavadi*. It’s just a matter of how much they like the pastimes, or how much they like *jnana*.

The *brahma-bhuta* platform means, you’re not in the material body. You’re in your natural, spiritual body, but the point is *brahma-bhuta* means you haven’t developed *prema*, but you’re on the *brahma-bhuta* platform. You’re on the transcendental platform. You’re not in the material world. You’re in the spiritual world, but you haven’t developed love for Krishna. Then, the process of *bhava-sadhana*, or *bhava-bhakti* is developing that love. So, when you come to the platform of actually being on that, then you’re qualified to go to *goloka*.

That’s why everybody goes through *gokula*.

Q: When we hear things like “Such and such devotee left their body, they went back to Godhead.”

BVPM: Yes. Back to Godhead means to *gokula*. It is back to Godhead. Krishna and the eternal associates don’t make any distinction. We’re the ones that make distinction. We’re the locative-*walas*. We’re the time and space people.

Comment: My question to a person who says that is, What is the *sastric* proof that these people went back to home, back to Godhead.

BVPM: That’s another thing. Don’t worry about that. The point is, if they remembered Krishna, they went, and if they didn’t they won’t. That’s all. It’s that simple.

Q: What is the proof that we can say they went or didn’t go?

BVPM: Why worry about it? You’re going to go up to the five-year-old, who says, “Mommy went to heaven”

“Actually your mom was meat eater and all that, and she used to drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes like a smoke-stack, so she’s probably rotting in hell right now. Don’t worry about it, kid. Let’s get it straight here. Cut out all this sentiment.” Is that what you’re going to do? You’re going to go out, stand there in the middle of Times Square and say “Santa is bogus! There is no Santa! Not only that, there is no Tooth Fairy!” like that, “So, all you kids, wake up! Welcome to the real world!” You’re going to do that, right? What does it matter?

The point is, if they see the devotee in connection with Krishna, then that’s beneficial. They are in connection and they are under Krishna’s direction. It’s just a matter of time. We make time a very big thing, but Brahma’s lifetime is ¾’s of a second, according to Krishna. If it didn’t happen now, it’ll happen next time. Everyone’s going, so the sentiment’s fine.

Comment: That’s the stance I always take. But, then it makes me worried, when people say “Everybody went back to Godhead very easily.” and they take the emphasis away from people actually doing the work.

BVPM: If they take away the emphasis, then you point out, “If we also want to go back to Godhead, then we have to work.” You just take that position and move it forward. Otherwise, it’s not that by playing it out, because what’s the work? The work is remembering Krishna, so if you remember Krishna, you go back to Godhead. You see in the letters, Prabhupada will say, “If he remembers Krishna, he goes back to Godhead, if he didn’t, then he’ll end up in some nice heavenly arrangement, or he would end up in a family of devotees.” That’s just the point, so the devotees will think about him thinking of Krishna, and in that way it connects it. It makes it work.

The point is, you start chanting, you’re not within the material sphere. The problem is, we by our material conditioning, still think we are. We’re not. The person is awake, but he’s still thinking about the bad dream, so they still identify and relive that and get the experiences, but they’re awake, but they can’t function as fully awake because they’re still in the dream, though they’re awake. The person’s come in contact with Krishna consciousness, they’re awake, but they’re still absorbed in the material consciousness.

The point is, you remember Krishna, and you go back to Godhead. What’s to say the person didn’t remember? He’s there, there’s *kirtana*, everybody’s there, there’s pictures, there’s a good chance they’ll remember. Who knows what’s going on. That’s why, just as much as people may be worried about getting sentimental, and speculating, we shouldn’t also be pessimistic and also speculate. How do you know what happened? It only takes a moment, it’s 1/11th of a second. You may have missed that moment. You coughed, or somebody came in the room and you would have missed 11 moments. A good cough and might have missed 22 or 33 moments. This is the process that works.

It’s not sentimental; it’s a science, but the point is, it’s based on the person’s actual devotional sentiment. There’s a science to create the environment for the sentiment to function. The difficulty is the sentitment is not functioning in a Krishna conscious environment. Sentiment is not the problem. Generically it’s not the problem. The problem is it’s not connected to Krishna.

Mother Yasoda is in complete illusion about her son being out with the *gopis.* Her point is He’s a young unmarried boy. He interacts so nicely with His mother, so He’s not engaged in anything that He shouldn’t be engaged in. Even if other elder *gopis* say that she should be careful about this, she doesn’t worry about it. One could say that’s sentimental, “Oh, mother Yasoda’s so sentimental.” But, because it’s connected to Krishna, it’s perfect. That’s what makes her who she is. That’s what makes all the other elder *gopis* follow her. Her sentiment to Krishna is the fullest.

That’s why we have to discriminate with the philosophy to see what is actually useful. Then we look at the medium.

Q: The devotees who pass and go to the heavenly planet, their timeframe is much faster?

BVPM: Their timeframe, you’re going to miss the golden age of Lord Caitanya if you’re in this time, yes.

Comment: So, it’s a big danger to us.

BVPM: Or, you’ll come back, just as this is now 40 years into it, you’ll come back 40 years till the end. So, those things you’re saying “Yeah, the movement’s going to fall apart, this and that.” Now it won’t, because it’s going towards the 5,000 years up, then it will fall apart, so all the things you said will happen, will happen. That’s also an option. Or, you have to go to another universe where it’s happening, and take part.

Comment: Or, without the mercy of being born again somewhere Lord Caitanya is.

BVPM: Born again. You really like these Born Agains.

Comment: No, I don’t.

BVPM: No. It says one will be born in these families and one can take up where one leaves off. That’s why then, persons from these kind of families, you have to be very careful how you preach to them. Make sure you use intelligence, to convince them of Krishna consciousness, rather than just very well meaning blunt enthusiasm. These are your class of people that are your best candidates for becoming *naradhamas*. A *naradhama* means one who knows about Krishna, or the process, and rejects it. That’s the definition of *naradhama.*

Just like *grhamedhi* means Krishna’s not in the center. Krishna’s involved, but not the center. The house is the center, and Krishna is one of the rings around the house. That’s a *grhamedhi*. A *grhastha* means Krishna is the center, and all the rings of the house go around that. That means, someone who you say is a devotee can’t be a *grhamedhi*. *Grhamedhi* doesn’t mean they have to be disgusting, stinky smelly, all that. Take the direct definitions, one can see one has to be very careful, very conscious.

But, the process is if one’s simply conscious, that’s all it takes. It’s very direct, but it’s very simple. So, anyone can do it.

Q: So, if a devotee did not reach the stage of *prema*, but still, at the time of death, he remembers Krishna, so he’s going back to Godhead?

BVPM: Yes, he’ll go to *gokula,* but why do we get caught on it has to be *prema*? You have to remember Krishna. That will free you from all material contamination. That will immediately situate you on the *brahma-bhuta* platform, so you’re on the transcendental platform, so you enter *gokula*, but the problem comes that for us, *gokula’s* not enough. But, for the residents of *goloka,* there’s no difference.

Comment: Also, I read you don’t go directly either to *goloka* or *gokula,* you go to *aprakata-lila*.

BVPM: *Aprakata-lila* and *gokula* are the same.

Q: So, you don’t have to be an unalloyed pure devotee to enter *gokula*?

BVPM: No. You just have to remember Krishna at the time of death. But, the point is, why would you remember Krishna, if everything else is more important? Krishna says remember Him, without anything else. You can remember Him, and something else. One devotee was telling me that he had a car accident, and then when he became conscious, he wasn’t in the car. The body was in the car, but he wasn’t in the car. He started to move away from the car, and he was thinking about Krishna, and everything and moving away from the car. Then, as he was going, he started to think “Oh, my daughter’s so young, what will happen to her?” Bang. He was back in the car, and aware of all his injuries. So Krishna means Him alone. Not Him and you’re daughter, Him and your money, Him and your business, Him and your wife, Him and your project for Him. No. Him: *baas*. You remember Him, it’s done. That means practice.

The more one is practicing, the more one is advanced, generally the more one would take to do that. You would be more natural. But, at the same time, because of the nature of leaving the body, things get more serious, so one, has a tendency to focus, so if Krishna is what’s prominent to you, you’re going to take shelter of whatever is going to make you feel secure. If it’s Krishna, then it will work. If it’s your mother, you’re going to stay.

I don’t know about now, but a few years back, I saw an article about researching on the black boxes on airplanes, and it said the last thing on every black box that was ever said, they’ll be saying this and that, talking between copilots and talking to ground control this and that and so many things, but the last thing they’d say before the crash would be mommy. You have guys who were intelligent, did their jobs and were very responsible, everything like that. That’s how they became pilots. Yahoos don’t become pilots. Wherever you feel secure that’s what you’re going to remember, so if Krishna’s your security, you’ll think of Him.

It’s a very simple process, but you want to ensure that the simple process works, so we have a very sophisticated process based on simple principles, by which you can apply Krishna consciousness everywhere, so Krishna becomes the actual goal, so at the time of death, you remember Krishna, and then you go to *gokula*.

Comment: Like the prayers of Queen Kunti to give shelter in times of difficulty.

BVPM: That’s the point. Difficulty’s not the problem. If you’re remembering Krishna, then you’re happy. Let’s say your house represents, to you that emotional security of having a loving family. It maybe a bit archaic, but humor me. We’ll go with this one. You’re working hard, you’ve got the thing. Mortgage is going on, but you run into some problems. Your mortgage thing gets something raised, or a bunch of punks move in across the street or something, so you feel not as secure.

Why you’re not happy is you’re not remembering what it is the reason you want the house: For that emotional family security. You’re thinking of other things “Oh, those guys. How could they raise my premium!?” This and that, you’re not remembering Krishna.

Krishna is that sense of security. He is security. He is emotion. He is those positions, motherness fatherness, wifeness, childness. He is that, so when you remember that, you’re happy. Distress means you’re not remembering that, so you think it’s this external form that is my obstacle to my being able to appreciate this, but because you’re not understanding the science, not being God conscious, therefore we thought all along it’s the house generating that sense of happiness, but it’s actually the qualities of Krishna that are generating. We’re just discussing that this is the *brahman* platform.

The actual problem is that forgetfulness of Krishna, so if you’re remembering Krishna, then these obstacles don’t get in the way. The theme is always something happens and they’ve taken someone who he loves very much, and he goes through all kinds of amazing obstacles to kill the bad guys and get his girlfriend back, or whatever it is. So, no one says “All those obstacles. This is really difficult. This is really lame, being a hero. Who’d want to go through all of that?” No. Everybody’s “Great!” Because it’s not the problems. If you remember your goal, and you’re experiencing that remembrance, no one says that’s a problem.

It’s when you’re not remembering, they say it’s a problem, but no one knows the science of what’s going on. They’ll think “Happiness is good. Distress is not good.” But it’s the distress that made the person go so much greater to prove the relationship or endeavor in the relationship and therefore the relationship becomes solid. One understands. One’s committed. Of course, that’s where the movie will end, because they don’t know anything more than that, but whatever.

The point is, for Queen Kunti, they see everything in relation to Krishna. So, the points of distress are more intense, so you remember Krishna even more. That’s why its not a problem for the devotees. The *gopis* aren’t thinking “Wow. You know this is such a trip. Every night I have to think of a new excuse of how to get out of the house. All the dressing up, and everything like that. It’s such a trip. It would be so much easier to sit at home and cook capattis for the family, read a little Krishna book, and stuff like that. Why all this going out in the forest with the lions, tigers and bears? All this jazz. Wouldn’t it be so much easier?” No. It’s not a problem, because they’re remembering Krishna.

For the devotee, there’s nothing that doesn’t generate the response of remembering Krishna. So if, in the difficulties, one is remembering Krishna, so then why won’t one remember Krishna at the time of death? It’s one good, this is your time to go back to Godhead, but at the same time, it comes with its difficulties.

Q: If one is on the *brahma-bhuta* platform, do they take birth in the holy *dhama*, like Mayapura or Vrindavana?

BVPM: Not necessarily, that you go to *gokula*. You take birth here, because you still have some needs. You’re here, Lord Caitanya appreciating. Devotees do what they do here. You either like it more, so you’re born in a family of practicing devotees, or you’re born in a family of general devotees who are not *sampradayic* specifically. Or, around here, you can be born in Muslim families. They appreciate what the devotees do, but they wouldn’t want to do it themselves. They have their own programs. They’re not really into the Vedic stuff. Sound familiar? Or animals or plants.

Q: But, is it true that whoever takes birth or dies in the holy *dhama* is liberated?

BVPM: How do you define liberation?

A: Freedom from material struggle.

BVPM: Yeah, but it doesn’t mean that because of your material conditioning, you don’t put yourself back into that. At the same time, you may be completely free from that. You have to see what it is. In other words, that’s not for you. What happened to that dog is not the point. What you do is actually going to be the point. You don’t have to stress and worry about all the plants and animals, and all that. It’s not that “Only if that dog goes back to Godhead, then I’m going to be serious about this process.” No. You be serious whether or not. The reason you’re a dog is they weren’t so serious. That’s the point to learn. They’re devotees, they’ll be liberated. But the point is do you want to be a dog?

Q: When we say someone dies in the *dhama*, goes back home, back to Godhead…

BVPM: No. We don’t say back to Godhead. Prabhupada said liberated. That may mean they go to that platform, you don’t know the reason they’re there. Jada Bharata was on the *brahma-bhuta* platform, he came as a deer, because of remembering a deer. You don’t know the reason. That’s all between them and Krishna. That’s why the *dhamavasis* are special. We stay out of their way, because its between them and Krishna.

We follow *sadhana.* We follow the *gosvamis*. That was Lord Caitanyas instruction, not to get too involved with the *vrajavasis*. They have their own process. We have another process. We follow what the *acaryas* have given us, and don’t worry about them.

Q: Do you have to be *bhava* or *brahma-bhuta*?

BVPM: *Bhava* and *brahma-bhuta* are the same.

Comment: I heard that some preachers emphasize that to get to Krishna’s pastimes, we should learn more about what they entail.

BVPM: You learn more in detail, but what you see is how many can even define *gokula* and *goloka*, *brahma-bhuta* and *bhava-sadhana*, and the *svarupa-siddhi*? They can’t even define the mechanics of the situation, so how are they acutally going to understand what’s there. The point is one should be hearing about Krishna’s pastimes because that’s the process: hearing about the name, form, qualities and pastimes. The process in name, form and qualities, so can they define those? Then, pastimes becomes very meaningful. Otherwise, how do you appreciate?

There’s a pastime, Krishna does something with the *gopis*. Radharani asks Krishna where did He stay last night. Then, He gives all kinds of clever answers. In appreciating that, one could just say, it’s a nice pastime, so that will be there, but if you understand Krishna’s quality of cleverness, then you appreciate that aspect. You’ll understand more. So, He has 64 qualities, you’ll understand them. You’ll appreciate the pastimes more. But, that’s not what’s emphasized.

They only talk about the pastime direct, which is nice as long as one is absorbed. But the point is these other aspects make it so there’s more to contemplate. Otherwise, the pastime is nice, and there’s all these other elements in your life, but if you understand what’s the science, you see all those aspects in your life, so you connect them to Krishna, so you appreciate it more. It’s isolated, and that’s not proper.

It’s part of the process, and that’s important. So, those who take the other side, “Anything to do with *raganuga*, we throw up the hands.” *Raga* simple means you’re natural and spontaneous in the devotional activities. That’s the direct form. They’ll say “No! It only means when you’re in the *bhava* of one of the residents.” But, what’s the *bhava* of one of the resident’s of Vrindavana? It’s full surrender that makes Vraja. It’s full surrender. Kubja, she is considering everything in connection to Krishna, but she thinks she’ll enjoy by being in connection with Krishna. She’s purusa sakti. Higher than that are the queens of Dvaraka. They’re seeing everything in connection to Krishna, but as wives, it’s 50/50. 50% is Krishna’s way, 50& is they’re way, but the *gopis*, that is 100% about Krishna.

It’s not the conjugal *rasa*. It’s the surrender that makes a *Vrajavasi*. That’s the element that’s being So we can say that here the element that Krishna’s talking about in the *gita*, this is talking about *vraja-bhakti.* The word He uses, *saranam vraja*, it has that subtle hint. That *vraja* means full surrender. That’s what makes it special. Otherwise, there’s conjugal relations going on in Vaikutha, Dvaraka and Ayodhya. It’s not the conjugal *rasa* that makes it special. It’s the full surrender. You could say, “Well, it’s *parikiya*.” Kubja’s relationship with Krishna is also *parikiya*. She’s not married to Him. It’s not even the *parikiya*. These are elements that heighten it. They’re details. The real point is that full surrender. That’s what makes a *vraja* devotee.

Full surrender, you could look at it that the attachment to Krishna is complete. So, if that’s accomplished, perfect. If it’s not, what are the elements that are getting in the way of that pure attachment? That pure surrender? Therefore the *gita* gives us, so you can analyize it. Remember, *gita* is the ABCs. This is the first of twelve years. Study doesn’t stop at twelve.

We have to remember that it’s important we know who Krishna is by reading about His pastimes, but its not that that itself is the only point. Its that that’s along with everything else. If I give you rice and *sabji* for lunch and it was good, what are you going to talk about? What are you going to tell people about?

A: *sabji*.

BVPM: *Sabji:* You’re not going to talk about the rice. But if I just gave you *sabji* on *ekadasi*, would you tell everybody it was great? “The *sabji* was nice, but it was only *sabji*.” But if its *sabji* and rice, “Wow, nice great lunch! It’s really great *sabji*. Nice flavors.” So, talking about the *gopis* without the process of *vaidhi*­-*bhakti*, then it doesn’t really have much meaning. The sincere people, its not very interesting to them.

Q: The detail involving remembering Krishna at the time of death, can you speak a little bit more, because many devotees, including myself are on the *kanistha* platform. So, could you speak more about the *prakrta* devotee, the materialistic devotee attaining Krishna.

BVPM: Are you presenting the *kanistha* and the *prakrta* as two separate elements or as the same element?

A: I understand *prakrta* devotee as being a materialistic devotee, is that incorrect?

BVPM: That’s not incorrect, but I got the idea that you’re separating *kanistha* and *prakrta*-*bhakta*.

Comment: No, I’m thinking they’re very similar because *kanistha’s* learning, so he must have materialistic aspects.

BVPM: According to the *acaryas*, they’re exact synonyms. *prakrta-bhakta* means that the materialistic aspects are very prominent in his life. The *madhyama* means he’s steady in the devotional process, so it’s the prominent element. Though there will still be the material side, but it’s not prominent. *Kanistha* is simply meaning that there’s lower, middle and higher stages. It’s a different term for defining what is the level one is at, and *prakrta* is defining why there at the levels.

The person at the *uttama-adhikari* level, they’re *brahma-bhuta*, so there’s no material attraction or desire. There on that platform, but there’s still the fragrance of conditioned life, so they still have the pious and impious results. That’s why devotees talk about “It’s nice, it’s good, just because of that, it’s good enough.” It’s going to be an obstacle because one’s pious activities still would hold one back, because they’re an identity. Here, the reason the gopis that don’t go when Krishna plays His flute, is because of these.

Because of these, they’re absorbed in performance of their duties. So, they’re performing their household duties, they’re making their cowdung patties, (even though those aren’t politically correct) cooking for the family, taking care of the children in the family, cooking for the husbands, that’s what they’re supposed to do, and it is the spiritual world, so there’s not going to be any problems. There are no problems. Everyhting’s perfect. They’re just so absorbed there, that their complete absorbtion in Krishna’s not obtained. That’s why they don’t go. But, because they’d like to go, and they are Krishna conscious, that’s how they got themselves there in the first place, that’s their natural relationship, then, when they can’t go, their natural meditation on Krisna is so full and complete, they come to the platform of *Samadhi*, then all the effect of their pious and impious results are burned up.

There is no distraction from that point by family life any more. The next time, the pastime happens, then yoga maya arranges they can go, unless there was only a little left and it happened immediately, they were stopped, then yoga maya arranged, then they went. But, for those who didn’t, then that pastime itself then completed the process, because you have to have complete attachment, that happens at *Samadhi*, that’s the third stage of *bhava-bhakti*. then they can associate.

They weren’t that focused, so they didn’t get the association of the eternal associates. It’s from the eternal associates then you learn fully the mood. they’re gopis so they have the mood of their conjugal relationship towards Krishna, but it’s not as strong as the eternal associates have. So, by their association, you develop that. Then, one’s able to serve and everything like that. Then one come’s to the stage where that’s now your position.

Q: Was Bharata Maharaja, at the moment of thinking of the deer, on the *brahma-bhuta* platform?

BVPM: (repeats question) Yes. You already had your question answered to confirm your materialistic concept. This is the last class before Gaura Purnima. We were supposed to start Vedic Psychology. Friday will be the next class, and it will continue till we finish seeing as we’re still on the same page. If you touch on certain topics, if you touch on *varnasrama*, that’s a good two or three day distraction. You touch on, how the soul fell, that can be weeks distractions. If you touch on going back to Godhead, gokula, goloka, *bhava*, *prema-bhakti*, this is definitely a couple of days.

Whenever these come up we always get these same distractions, and basically the same questions, because they’re not doubts, they’re misgivings. “I want the highest. *Goloka’s* the highest; therefore I can’t really settle for *gokula,* and *gokula* can’t actually be spiritual if it’s not already there.” But, it can be. That’s the meaning of *tatastha*. *Tatastha* means they’re both. We really have problems understanding because we’re not self-realized, we’re *tatastha-sakti*, therefore we can’t understand *tatastha-sakti*.

The two are in the same place at the same time. Krishna is there. That’s who He is. He’s standing on Vrindavan. All the gopis are there, and they’re all scared. They’re in Vrindavan. And Aristasura is there, and he’s a demon in the material form and he’s stepping on what everybody else would say is Vrindavan, but *nila’s* not there. The internal potency’s not there, he’s stepping on the external potency. So, they’re both at the same place at the same time.

That’s the difference between *gokula* and *goloka*. There is no manifestation as such, of that *tatastha*. The *tatastha* there is in the fire of the internal potency. So, you don’t see that manifestation. There’s no need. But, because you’re trying to choose between material and spiritual, or you’ve chosen spiritual, now between spiritual and devotional, or you’ve chosen devotional, between devotional and pure unalloyed devotional, for us, or devotional and pure devotional for everybody else, so that’s the point where it’s being done.

Q: We all know that conlusion verse of Bhagavad-gita, *sarva-dharman parityajya*, but somehow, Lord Caitanya rejected that as external when Ramananda Raya brought it up as the goal of life.

BVPM: No. He brought up *varnasrama*.

Comment: He brought up *varnasrama*, then he brought up that verse *jnana-misra-bhakti*, after that and the first thing that Lord Caitanya accepted was hearing from self-realized souls, *bhakti*, with no tinge of *jnana.*

BVPM: So, what’s the difference between that and *sarva-dharman parityajya*?

A: I’ve speculated how that could have been rejected.

BVPM: You have to go back to look. Was it actually rejected? Isn’t that the point where He says “Okay, now we’re starting to talk something.”?

A: No. It was two verses further.

BVPM: So, the point is, still the element of *dharma* is the prominent aspect. You’re giving up the religion and surrendering. So that’s still not technically, pure devotional service. What He’s pointing out is you have to surrender, then perform your *dharma*. You’re *dharma* has to be connected to that surrender, rather than your surrendering to that *dharma*.

The surrender, that is your *dharma,* rather than starting with *dharma*, and then surrendering it. So, it would appear that the context as it’s carrying on from the *varnasrama* discussion, still had that element to it. Becaue some will interpret that *dasyam* will mean engaging your nature according to *varnasrama*, in the Lord’s service. Which technically is *dasyam*, but it’s not the *varnasrama* element, it’s engaging your nature that’s actually the aspect. So, we don’t emphasise so much the *varnasrama* aspect. Rupa Gosvami, but let’s say the Madhva’s and Sri’s, that’s very much, because, in Vaikuntha it’s vaidhi, so it’ll remain that way. So it would be interpreted that way, but for us, it’s not.

So, the element of hearing and chanting in the association, that is the actual point of *apana dasa.* When you’ve come to *purva-raga*  in the association of devotees, that’s the only place you’re going to come to that pure attachment to Krishna. Therefore, coming to the *brahma-bhuta* platform, *svarupa-siddhi*, that’s alright, but Bharata Maharaja fell from that platform, so that’s not the platform that we’ll say, “That’s perfection.” It is perfection, but it’s not the ultimate perfection.

So, it’s gets actually serious when you take up the association of the eternal associates. That’s serious, but that element continues down to when you associate with devotees and hear from them. Just like you have your *svarupa,* but in the beginning stages that you’re a servant of Krishna. What form you have, that’s a detail. That association with devotees is actually what makes the process work. That’s the real thing. Then you could say, “Okay, that would be where we would start.” Then it would be the quality of that, the surrender, and that’s what you would see from there it would very quickly move into the elements of *rasa* and *prema-bhakti*.

We’ll see it here, but actually, in the devotional platform, *bhava-sadhana*, that’s what makes it work, just as what makes our *sadhana-bhakti* here work, is that. So, on the *brahma-bhuta* platform, when you take that up, it very quickly moves into *prema*, while here, it’s dynamic, that it might take a few years.

Q: Are the residents in *gokula* progressing to *goloka*?

BVPM: It depends on if they’re *nitya-siddhas*, if they’re coming down or going up. If they’re going up then, yes. If they’re coming down, then they’re already here. They don’t see any difference.

Q: Is it possible to change your *rasa* in the spiritual world?

BVPM: What’s the point? If it’s simply a matter of options, the point is its still connected to Krishna. If you absorb yourself in Krishna, that’s the perfection. So, how you particularly absorb yourself in Krishna, that’s a detail. That’s not the prominent element. First, you get to the point of always thinking of Krishna, then these things will make sense.

Q: I can understand that when you always serve Krishna in the spiritual world, you have no desire to change.

BVPM: But, the point is you’re only thinking about is options, like you’re going to a restaurant. You want to enjoy, so what are your options of enjoyment? “Well, I’ve done that one, why not this one?” We like that a la carte approach to spiritual. But the point is if we’re fully absorbed in Krishna, then that mood will be natural, automatic. We don’t have to worry about it. What I’m saying is this mathematical approach to if its possible or not, what’s the importance?

In *gokula*, you wouldn’t because you’re in your spiritual form, its already there. Why would you choose? Otherwise you have to have LGBT, committee.

Comment: There was a question put to me that you can’t change your position because everything is stagnant, and fixed.

BVPM: Stagnant. (Laughter) Why the word stagnant? The person who said that, their intelligence is stagnant. There’s no such thing as stagnant. If that’s there, then what they would really like is, every time they walk in the door to their house, it’s a complete surprise what mood that person who is legally married to them, as a wife may take.

They walk in and actually it’s Santa Claus, next day, they walk in and they’re their mother in law. Now, that would be a real twist on things is your actual wife becomes your mother in law. This way, every day it changes. Next day, she’s your daughter, next day, you walk in and she’s your poodle! You’re like why’s she a dog? This would really give taste to *grhastha* life, not this static, boring. This person you’re legally married to and every day you come home and every day your there with your wife. Isn’t that just static and really old fashioned?

Comment: Imagine what it does to the kids?

BVPM: You walk in and it’s not even your house anymore. The neighbor, “Sorry, your house is three doors down, today. Great house!” This is the problem. They’re so worried that they won’t be happy that they want their options open. Which is natural. It’s a feminine quality, but they have to understand it comes from that quality because they’re feminine, the soul. The point is, its in connection with Krishna, so even if it is something different, who cares? and if it’s not, who cares? If it’s connected to Krishna, because He’s ever-expanding, there’s always something new and fresh, so He’s *nava-yauvana*. Even if it’s the same relationship, every day, day in day out, eternally, it’s still ever fresh. It will never get boring. We’re simply applying the material. The less we have variety in this way, it won’t be good, then we’re trying to apply that on the spiritual world. But, its actually because there’s spiritual variety that works here. Here it’s temporary, bodies change. Everything changes. there, it doesn’t. The variety is within the context of one’s relationship, one’s situation. Radharani’s always from Varsana. She’s never from anywhere else. Not “I’ve been from Varsana, eternally. Can’t I be from somewhere else? Come on.” The point is, once one comes to *gokula*, one’s in one’s spiritual body. If there’s any change it would be before that. The point is it’s a matter of uncovering who you are.

Q: If I was to have a feeling of who I was, after coming into this movement, would I always have that form in the spiritual world?

BVPM: That you have to see if it’s actually in line. It may be speculation. You have to see, is it in line with *sastra*, or is it just your feelings?

Comment: That’s why I’m asking it. If it was in line, would that mean that it was always that

BVPM: Yeah. The point is the mirrors dirty, and you rub on the mirror. When you can actually see your face, is it going to be a different face? It’s the same face. It’s like the cloak room. You go into a place and leave your coat at the door. When you leave, you get your coat back, so the spiritual identity gets left at the door.

We got through two paragraphs, because the other was review. At this pace, hopefully we’ll finish before Nrsimha Chaturdasi!